as my own. The doctor obligingly prescribed the hospital ration for me—a glass of milk for breakfast and a slice of white bread for the noon meal. In addition, he gave me some drops and told his assistant to give me an extra blanket. A few days later I similarly obtained aspirin and ointment against rheumatism for Misha. The doctor was all sweetness toward me, though he must have seen that I was a phony patient.

Much later I learned that he was taking money from my mother. After my trial, she had called on him in his private office and complained of a sore throat. The doctor gave her a twenty-kopek prescription and was ready to pocket the usual one-ruble fee when my mother timidly pressed a twenty-five-ruble note into his hand. He thanked her and asked whether she had any relatives in the city, perhaps in the prison. She told him that her son was in the Castle, and she was worried about his health.

"Don't worry," said the good doctor. "I happen to be the prison physician and can keep an eye on him."

"I do not know whether I should impose on you," she said hesitatingly.

"No trouble at all—twenty-five rubles a month."

Knowing nothing of this arrangement, I loathed the doctor but went to the pharmacy each week to get medicine, a tube of toothpaste, or a cake of soap for tower inmates. Meanwhile my own condition did not improve and boils covered my entire body. I had spells of dizziness and would lie for hours on the cot with strange optical hallucinations—the tower turning around me, the walls changing shape and forming unexpected corners. These spells were accompanied by spasms of dread.

My companions did not notice the change. For them I remained the strong man without nerves. Misha was first to realize I was seriously ill and urged me to go to the doctor, but I refused fiercely to ask the rogue for favors for myself.

One morning when I lay on the cot, Yegerev sat down at my bedside and began to ask me how I felt. Fever? Headache? Sweat? Did I have any trouble in breathing or swallowing? The poor soldier was earnestly worrying about me. In the afternoon he reported to the guard that he was ill and wished to see the doctor at once. This sounded like typhus to the guard, and he took the prisoner to the hospital. Yegerev proudly returned from the doctor with a vial of some potion and a box of pills . . . for me! He had complained to the doctor of weakness and dizziness, describing my symptoms. From this day on he acted as my nurse and so, not to disappoint him, I swallowed his drugs. Next, he obtained a glass of milk for me for breakfast.